Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 MONTEV 04819 111425Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 DHA-05 TRSE-00 AID-05 /071 W
----------037141 112102Z /70
R 111301Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4982
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MONTEVIDEO 4819

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SHUM, PGOV, PINT, PINS, UY
SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS: EL DIA REOPENS

REF: MONTEVIDEO 4635

1. SUMMARY. AFTER A TEN DAY SUSPENSION OF PUBLICATION EL DIA REOPENED WITH A NEW MANAGING EDITOR AND A LONG EDITORIAL FOCUSING ALMOST ENTIRELY UPON THE GUILT OF THE UNKNOWN CULPRIT WHO PRECIPITATED THE CLOSURE BY INCLUDING TWO WORDS IN THE CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING. THE EDITORIAL IS A RELATIVELY WEAK ANSWER TO THE SEVERE SANCTIONS TAKEN AGAINST THE NEWSPAPER AND MAY WELL PORTEND A LESSENING OF EL DIA'S OPPOSITON STANCE. THE EXPULSION OF ITS MANAGING EDITOR AND THE REMOVAL OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MAY ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO A GRADUAL EMASCULATION OF THE NEWSPAPER. EL PAIS, MEANWHILE, BOWED TO PRESSURE AND WITHDREW FROM PRINT A SPEECH MADE BY A COUNCILLOR OF STATE DEPLORING THE EL DIA CLOSURE AS AN ATTACK ON THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. WE WILL BE WATCHING TO SEE WHETHER EL DIA RETURNS TO A MEANINGFUL OPPOSITION ROLE AND TO GAUGE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS IT DURING ITS TRIALS. END SUMMARY.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MONTEV 04819 111425Z

2. AFTER A FORCED TEN DAY ABSENCE, URUGUAY'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS MEWSPAPER, EL DIA RETURNED TO THE NEWSSTANDS OCTOBER 7 WITH A NEW MANAGING EDITOR AND A 7-COLUMN FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL DISCLAIMING EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TWO OFFENSIVE WORDS WHICH PRECIPITATED THE CLOSURE OF THE NEWS-PAPER, THE EXILE OF ITS MANAGING EDITOR AND THE REVOCATION

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

OF ITS TAX EXEMPTIONS. WITH THE EXPULSION OF MANAGING EDITOR LEONARDO GUZMAN, THE OWNERS OF THE DAILY TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO REALIGN ITS EDITORIAL/ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF. WITH ONLY ONE EXCEPTION, THE NEW STAFF IS COMPOSED OF MEMBERS OF THE BATLLE FAMILY. WHILE REPRESENTING A NET LOSS OF JOURNALISTIC EXPERIENCE, THE NEW ALIGNMENT IS PROBABLY MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOU.

3. AFTER EXPLAINING IN DETAIL THE INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS WHICH PRECEDED THE CLOSURE, EL DIA'S FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL QUOTES AN EDITORIAL WHICH IT SAID ALMOST APPEARED IN THE FIRST EDITION PRINTED AFTER THE INCIDENT. THIS QUOTATION STATES THAT EL DIA IS AN OPPOSITION NEWSPAPER, BUT HARSHLY CRITICIZES THE UNKNOWN PERPETRATOR OF THE DEED. EL DIA CHARACTERIZES THE ACT AS ONE OF "CURRISH OPPOSITION," COMPLETELY AT ODDS WITH ITS "MANLY OPPOSITION," WHICH IS HONEST, SINCERE AND LOYAL. EL DIA THEN EXPLAINS THAT THE QUOTED EDITORIAL DID NOT APPEAR BECAUSE THE NEWSPAPER DECIDED THAT IT WOULD CALL TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO THE INCIDENT AND POSSIBLY OBSTRUCT THE POLICE INVESTIGATION. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES BY SAYING THAT THE EXPULSION OF GUZMAN IS IN-EXPLICABLE.

4. EL DIA'S REGULAR EDITORIAL FOCUSES ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THE QUESTION OF TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR NEWSPAPERS, ARGUING THAT THE PEOPLE ARE THE REAL BENEFICIARIES OF THEM. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 MONTEV 04819 111425Z

EDITORIAL NOTES THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE TAX EXEMPTION LOSS, LAMENTING THAT THIS FORCES AN INCREASE IN PRICES (23 PERCENT PER COPY AND 33 PERCENT FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING) AND A REDUCTION IN SIZE.

5. IN WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT SUPPORTING EL PAIS WAS TO REPRINT A SHORT SPEECH MADE OCTOBER 4 IN THE COUNCIL OF STATE BY COUNCILLOR DANIEL RODRIGUEZ LARRETA. RODRIGUEZ LARETTA, ONE OF THE FEW COUNCILLORS PUBLICLY TO VOICE INDEPENDENT VIEWS, TOOK THE GOVERNMENT TO TASK FOR THE CLOSING ANDSTATED THAT IT WOULD DEEPLY AFFECT FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN URUGUAY. HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE INCIDENT COULD ONLY TARNISH THE NATION'S IMAGE AT A TIME WHEN THE GOVERNMENT WAS TRYING TO BETTER THAT IMAGE.

6. COMMENT: EL DIA'S RETURN EDITORIAL PERHAPS REFLECTS THE NEWSPAPER'S HOPE TO REGAIN ITS TAX EXEMPTIONS EVEN AT THE COST OF KOWTOWING TO THE GOVERNMENT. IF THIS SUB-MISSIVENESS CONTINUES IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE SINCE THE REAPPEARANCE OF THE NEWSPAPER AT ADDITIONAL COST PROVIDES A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE POPULACE TO SEND A MESSAGE TO ITS GOVERNMENT BY SUPPORING EL DIA. AS ONE OBSERVER

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER "NOW WE WILL FIND OUT IF DEMOCRACY
IS WORTH AN EXTRA 40 PESOS (ONE DIME) A DAY." WE WILL BE
WATCHING CLOSELY TO SEE IF EL DIA REFUSES TO ABANDON ITS
OPPOSITION ROLE AND WHETHER PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR IT MATERIALIZES.
PEZZULLO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, CENSORSHIP, NEWSPAPERS, INFORMATION CONTROL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MONTEV04819
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770370-0765
Format: TEL
From: MONTEVIDEO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771075/aaaaclka.tel
Line Count: 121
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: dc559e32-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MONTEVIDEO 4635
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 968184
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUMAN RIGHTS: EL DIA REOPENS
TAGS: SHUM, PGOV, PINT, PINS, UY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/dc559e32-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009